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Donna Wieting, Chief
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National Marine Fisheries Service
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Dear Ms. Wieting,
SUBJECT: SURTASS LFA SONAR
PROGRAM (PAF 01-197)

Aloha and thank you for this opportunity to comment on this issue. I have lived in Hawaii since 1968, I became a motor boat operator in 1970 from the US Coast Guard. As a dive boat captian I would spend as much as 1000 hrs. a year under water. I am an under water photographer kayaker and free diver, this issue is very important to me.
I have also worked under water operating 60# jack hammer for 6 hrs a day. I have experienced the fatigue involved with intense noise and vibration under water. The thought of imposing this abuse on 80% of our Oceans is unaceptable.

The Navy has reportedly 350-450 Million dollars at stake in this project. There are other passive sonar devices that will detect subs with out disrupting and killing the marine wild life. How can this type of spending be approved to duplicate a system that already works? and at such a threat to our Oceans.

DEAD WHALES SINK, we have no idea how many whales and marine life have already been killed or affected. The common thread on what I have read is that no body really knows for sure what the affects of the LFA will be. There are many unanswered questions among some are the affects of resonance, disruption of communication, breeding, and singing of marine mammals, not to mention the effects on the rest of the marine life. The Navy wants to do it and see what happens. Can we afford to take that chance with 80% of our Oceans? We have abused our Oceans by over fishing with hi tech methods, polluted with toxic waste, pesticides, sound from ships, and oil spills all over the world. Our Oceans are already in grave danger.

We have worked so hard to stop harpooning whales for food and oil, now our Navy is blasting and torturing them with sound and letting them rot.

What is the purpose of the "Marine Mammal Conservation Division Office of Protected Resources" ? If they are issuing permits to kill endangered marine life, where is the conservation, where is the protection? How much of the environment do we have to destroy before we realize THIS IS NOT A GOOD IDEA!!

The example below is a way for me to attempt to understand the affects of the purposed LFA sonar.

Consider the vehicle down the street driving by with his array of speakers in the car playing RAP music loud enough to rattle your windows. How do you feel about that?
If he turns it up until your ears hurt and you can't talk on the phone or concentrate. If every where you want to go you can hear this constant beat in ten second bursts?
If he turns it up double and people on the streets are collapsing or running in panic to find safety which there is none, how would you feel about that? How about if it went on for five years?
IS this what we are purposing to do to our marine environment?

I have read letters from the scientific community which have very convincing information on the inaccuracy of the Navy's testing at180db when they admit the deployment level is 250db.
The aerial survey in Kona was NOT conducted over the location of the LFA test in progress. This information is from an observer on board the plane during the test.

The test I would like to see is: the people pushing this project being under the water while testing at full strength. And how far away from the source would they be willing to do this test? How long could they be exposed to this torturous sound before going insane. IT is time to stop killing these whales and marine mammals.

It is my view and prayer that common sense and respect for or oceans will shine through this complex and uncertain issue to DENY the U.S. Navy's application for permission to deploy the SURTASS LFA sonar system worldwide for five years.
Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on this issue.

Aloha
Randy Miller